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ABSTRACT

The Ohio Continuing Higher Education Association (OCHEA) is becoming increasingly vital in Ohio, with a membership of more than half of the state's 140 colleges and universities, and the prospect of continued growth. New initiatives have been launched: the newsletter expansion, the issuance of the first OCHEA publication (covering state requirements for licensing), leadership conferences, and the complete revision of the constitution and by-laws. The association has experienced remarkable collegiality, and continued cooperation bodes well for the future. However, the future also poses questions, such as the following: (1) what is the relationship between the constituencies?; (2) how can the state be encouraged to adopt a policy on adult learning?; (3) what turf decisions are being made about continuing higher education in Ohio?; (4) should OCHEA share program resources as well as marketing?; (5) does OCHEA gain from the potential for linking, formally and informally, with other higher education-based associations?; (6) how does OCHEA relate to the research base of its colleges and universities?; and (7) what differentiates OCHEA from other providers? The answers to these questions must be found in the coming years if OCHEA is to remain viable. The association needs leaders to carry on the work. Each member must make a new commitment to carry on the work of OCHEA and higher continuing education in Ohio. (KC)

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OHIO CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
5th Annual Conference
Mohican State Park Lodge
Perrysville, Ohio
July 16, 1987

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# "OCHEA: ITS STRENGTHS AND ITS QUESTIONS"

Our professional field receives varying degrees of institutional recognition and support dependent upon the understanding and commitment of the chief academic officers and chief executive officers to the mission and role of continuing education. A similar level of understanding and commitment is required of the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents and the staff. We believe that our institutions and the State are stronger and more relevant to society's needs based on the connections of continuing higher education to the teaching and research mission of our colleges and universities.

As in the past, at this juncture when the President of OCHEA lays down the charge given, it is customary to attempt some statement about the Association and its mission and goals and future. It is as if there is a particular perspective given to someone who is saying goodbye, a slant on events which this moment of change affords. As in any assessment we need to recognize both light and shadow, success and failure, accomplishments and tasks left undone.

In these remarks, let me sketch this assessment, first in terms of answers we have grown into and, second, in terms of questions which stand unavoidably before us.

## ANSWERS

So many things rise before our consciousness in any rapid review, answers ranging from the feelings of some that OCHEA has not met their expectations, that the organizations in place before 1983 were able to address the needs of our institutions more directly, that national associations meet the needs more directly to OCHEA provides just the right mix of opportunity and challenge. Rather, I point to the general and increasing vitality of the Association and of continuing higher education in our State inspite of neglect by some of our institutions and the Ohio Boards of Regents.

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While we, as an Association, do not have the institutiional membership of all of Ohio's 140 colleges and universities, we have over one half and the prospect of increasing those numbers as the benefits of Association membership are appropriately represented to non-members. During the current year we had 77, a growth from the 44 founding members. But we have lost institutional membership ground each year by non-renewal. Had we retained those lost, the Association membership base would be nearly 100.

We have strengthened the associate member ranks to 135 up from 1985-1986. Yet, a doubling of that number and more is possible based on known staffing patterns in continuing higher education across the state in two-year and four-year institutions. The total membership is 213 vs 160 a year ago. That is up 53 or 25%. Yet much remains to be done.

The Association committees have assumed new life based on the revision of the Constitution and Bylaws. In 1986-1987 over 100 associate and institutional members were appointed to standing committees. With continuity in the standing committees, in terms of charge and membership, much can be accomplished.

I think of the dedication of the Executive Board, past and present, in advancing the purposes of the Association. Out of the Committees and the Executive Board have come new initiatives: **The Awards and Honors System** - OLLO, program development awards, a special achievement award, and the service to the Association award; **the newsletter - The Continuing Educator** - expanded in scope, coverage and relevance; **the issuance of the first OCHEA publication - State Requirements for Occupational and Professional Licensing and Continuing Education,** the **second annual proclamation by Governor Celeste of Adult and Continuing Education Week in Ohio,** and the **conduct of a meeting with state agency and department heads and training officers** to alert them to our Association's goals; **the conduct of the Association's first Leadership Conference** and the **development of an Officer, Executive Board and Committee Chairman Handbook,** designed to establish a forward thrusted planning cycle for the Association and building on the goal of insuring the continuity of ideas and service across the committees; **the formulation through the committees and Executive Board of a Report on the Future of OCHEA** which set out seven major areas of consideration; **the conduct of conferences with more than 900** in attendance; and **the complete revision of the Constitution and Bylaws.**

Having served on the current and two previous Executive Boards, I can attest to the dedicated efforts of the past presidents, officers and members of the Executive Boards. Ferris two years ago referred to his term in **Spockian** terms as "the terrible twos" - crawling. Sr. Donna might have described her term as the period of gaining a sense of balance. The current year has been one of directed action, preparing to run as we

enter the fifth year. Through the first three years and into the fourth the Association has continued to build upon the base which has carried forward from the 1983 meetings in Columbus culminating in the founding of the Association April 21, 1983. It is interesting to reflect on how we got here.

Let me briefly sketch some **marker events** which preceeded an August 1982 Conference in Cleveland and the planning for and eventual call by Chancellor Moulton of the Ohio Board of Regents for a Committee on a Statewide Continuing Education Organization in November 1982. In the summer of 1980 Rosalind Taleriko, Susan McGough, Ferris Anthony and I met at the Western Campus of Cuyahoga County Community College to explore how the two associations, the Ohio Continuing Education Council and the Ohio Council on Higher Continuing Education, might begin working more closely together. This was followed by a joint meeting of the two associations at the Fawcett Center for Tomorrow at OSU in the Fall of 1980, when Chancellor Moulton addressed those assembled. Those who were present will recall his "snake oil salesman" charge and the cake decorating and belly dancing inditement. Look at us now! We are tied to state initiatives in economic development.

Interestingly enough we have returned to the "scene of the crime". Well not exactly a crime, for it was in July 1981 that OCEC and OCHCE held a joint conference - our third date - here at Mohican State Park Lodge. That was six years ago and here we are tonight. Our courtship lasted two and a half years. Now we are one joined with the state's private colleges and universities in a unified state-wide continuing higher education association. The Association is basically sound, not perfect, but sound.

Among the signs of our vitality I would like to single out two developments within the Association itself: (1) **collegiality** and (2) **an expanding sense of environmental realism.**

We all understand collegiality. The brief but active period that we have lived together as members of OCHEA since April 1983 have provided striking evidence of collegiality across our institutions. Let me recall some illustrations of which you have been a party to over the last two days:

- Our conferences such as this, of which there have been nine, bring us together to share and to exchange and to learn from each other, regardless of our institutional type.

- **The Continuing Educator**, our newsletter, provides for up-to-date information and exchange of ideas across the Association.

- Our publication of requirements in state and the intention to produce a volume on voluntary continuing education.

- o The Committees and Executive Board meetings, tasks and projects where focus is beyond the single institution or type but rather focused on the profession.

What I wish to underline is, **what we have done, we have done together** and that it is the Association which has encouraged our communal investment in works that touch us all. These have helped to develop a sense of community among professionals in continuing higher education in our state.

The second development is our **expanding sense of environmental realism** as an indication of the vitality of our Association and our profession. By environmental realism I mean that as continuing educators, tied, like our programs to the environment -- Market, Location, Trends -- we are by the very nature of our program development responsibilities and process involved in scanning the environment for needs and trends. That environmental realism has also caused many in continuing higher education to take the view that we must pull away from our separatism of the past and work together regardless of our institutional type. There are some who still favor separatism but a larger number see the benefits of **collaboration** and **cooperation.** We need to urge the Regents to direct efforts in that direction, as well.

We must be willing to respect the genuine differences and rich pluralism of our higher education system in Ohio of which continuing higher education is a vital part.

**Questions**

If collegiality and environmental realism are answers into which we have grown, a critical assessment also raises questions that confront the Association and whose resolution we do not yet enjoy.

Among those questions, I see one focusing on the **relationship between the constituencies** and the possibility of rethinking the governance and structure of the Association. The constituencies have served an important role in establishing the Association in providing for an umbrella or federation under which the forerunner organizations could initially move without loosing their respective identities while learning about other settings.

They, the constituencies, let us come together to begin a process of working together on projects and tasks of common interest which go beyond the boundaries of our respective institutional type. The first requisite for membership in our Association is an institutional base. Thus, I do not suggest that we set aside the institutional base of our members, but I do suggest that we find a way to **deemphasize the differences** and to **build upon the commonalities** across our colleges and universities

whether branch, regional, technical and community college, public or private college and university - through our programs and services.

One of the Association's purposes is to provide professional development opportunities for staff. That professional development has its direct, and most personal and institutional, application when relevant to duties and roles back on the home front.

If your role on the home front is related to adult student services, conferences, economic development, technology transfer non-credit courses, summer school, finance, off-campus credit, marketing or many other areas one might identify within continuing higher education, would your interest in this Association be heightened if a network of program, service and resource exchange existed formally within the Association? For lack of a better term I've taken the ASTD label - Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

The experiences of yesterday afternoon when several groups of more than twenty gathered to share and investigate topical areas indicate that we might, by permitting each Association member to affiliate with two or three SIGs, build-in professional development, as well as capacity building. They could also impact on the Association in the development of conference sessions, lessening the burden on the conference program committees; hold drive in conferences on "hot" topics between the conferences; provide **The Continuing Educator** with articles and information focused on applications which would benefit all. The real benefit of such a structure is that it could broaden our horizons, provide for sharing across institutional type and promote professional development more than the current constituency base since it plays up our differences.

I commend the idea to you for discussion and to the new Executive Board.

The **second area of investigation** or questioning I would mention is related to the Association but also has a direct link to each of our continuing education operations at home. At a time when training and education are a part of the buzzwords of economic development, **the State has not addressed a policy on adult learning.** From a public policy perspective, a policy on adult learning should involve social justice, quality assurance, a funding mechanism, student assistance, credential learning and a coordinating mechanism.

Today's emphasis on adult basic education and literacy education, if targets are met, coupled with upgrading of public primary and secondary education, will shift those attaining literacy and having met the new standards and skills to higher education through the workplace and the application of technology to the workplace. In an anticipatory step the State through the

Ohio Board of Regents should focus on the development of a policy on adult learning including those collegiate-level learning experiences that count toward degrees and certificates and those non-credit continuing education experiences that render service to both adult learners and organizations (workplace and community).

We only need to look at National and Ohio demographics which indicate a need to look at or to expand our view of lifelong learning to explore new approaches to senior citizen education which will go beyond the State's Program 60 legislation passed in 1976 permitting us and our institutions to remain relevant to an emerging new majority. You will recall that I first raised this concern in the December 1986 issue of **The Continuing Educator** with a challenge to OBOR, the Department of Aging, IUC, OTCCA and OCHEA.

When our Presidents and Provosts or Academic Deans discuss continuing education, they end up comparing apples and oranges because of the way our institutions have divided up the responsibility for continuing education and created an organizational diversity which defies description. Nonetheless, they compare us only to their confusion and our confounding.

Yet in the real academic world of schools and colleges, our institutions have strong, almost rigid, parallelism with only slight divergence from accepted definition of components. Would not a common definition and identification of components of continuing higher education in the State of Ohio be helpful in gaining understanding and acceptance within our institutions, let alone in relating to the needs of the workplace? The recently announced intention by the Regents to incorporate the non-credit survey into its Uniform Data Collection System may lead the Regents in this direction but we may have to spur their thought processes for institutional and state benefits and also for consumer needs.

At a time when continuing higher education is at center stage as part of economic development, the model of states like Oklahoma where the Regents for Higher Education have developed an Oklahoma Network for Continuing Higher Education designed to conduct leadership development activities for academic leaders, scholars and business leaders and to facilitate the communication of their concerns about the future. The Oklahoma Regents have taken the leadership with funding from private foundations to address issues of importance and significance to the state's future as it relates to continuing higher education. In Ohio our lead person as Administrator for Continuing Education at the Regents has been assigned other priority roles leaving us adrift at that level.

In Ohio we should encourage the Regents to explore the Oklahoma model for its application to Ohio for the long range benefit of creating an environment in our colleges and

universities in which adults will be able to pursue lifespan learning to meet their personal and professional needs and to create within the Regents a state-wide Center for Study and Research in Continuing Higher Education, regardless of institutional type.

A third question focuses on **what turf are decisions being made about continuing higher education in Ohio?** One view may indicate within our institutions. Another view would position that many important decisions relating to continuing higher education are being made in state boards and agencies where licensure and relicensure decisions are made at the regulatory level. The recently enacted real estate law changes take those programs further outside the continuing higher education delivery system. New insurance education requirements are also in place. Why? Because of myopia. Our institutions and the Regents need to become aware of the new turf on which decisions are being made which impact higher education, in general, and continuing education. It is essential that the Association, our institutions and the Ohio Board of Regents monitor and speak on issues impacting continuing higher education. We no longer **own** the ball field. If we and the Regents sit idly by, we will continue to find ill conceived decisions which are disadvantages to continuing higher education and the consumer. We've witnessed this in education and the social worker and counselor legislation.

We must **take heed** that the action impacting higher education is not just with the Regents and the Department of Education but is taking place in 20-30 state licensing boards, as well.

A **fourth area of questioning: Should we share program resources - planning and faculty - as well as marketing?** Our institutions develop special resources - plant and faculty. The localization of that expertise is all well and good with regard to degree programs but when it comes to the need for continuing education, that expertise must be shared across the State and outside the sphere on influence of the home-based institution. The Excellence Program funding by OBOR is designed to encourage this. Also the Network to Keep Ohio Working has elements imbedded.

Might we demonstrate to OBOR, the Legislature and our own colleges and universities that we can work together to **compliment** the higher education delivery system and to link with major initatives at the State level?

By joining together we could also explore ways to reduce the impact of Success Builders, Padgett Thompson, Career Track, Key Productivity Center, Dun and Bradstreet and Prime Learning International. We've all seen their brochures listing 10-15 or more locations across the State or region where their for-profit programs are offered. The brochures are four color, on glossy

paper, and mailed state-wide. We cannot afford this effort at most of our institutions but by working together we could offer quality programs at 10-15 locations across the State. We could block purchase mailing lists and cooperatively print and mail and even register for the event. All of this presupposes that we can work together.

At the NUCEA Conference in Kansas City last April, Gary Matkin, author of **Effective Budgeting in Continuing Education,** suggested in a session on "Collaboration Among Providers" that an institution might capitalize on and amortize its program development costs by sharing programs with other institutions. Similar collaborative efforts were described in needs assessment and data collection and identification of trends. Why not in Ohio?

The recent issue of **The Continuing Higher Education Review** focuses on collabortion in an article by Bill Young and Ron Cervero.

I am not suggesting that we become like a chorus line of trained seals, responding at the right time and on the right note to hit the ball in unison. At times we might make more progress together if we were but our diversity of institutional type and experience make for a richness in our system of delivering continuing higher education.

A **fifth area of inquiry which the Association needs to explore: Do we gain from the potential for linking, formally and informally, with other higher education based associations?** This past year after the decision not to affiliate with the Coalition on Adult and Continuing Education in Ohio was made an initiative was set in place to bring together higher education-based associations in Ohio in student activities, financial aid, registrar, admissions officers, developmental education, career services, academic advisors around the focus of the **adult learner.** Time did not permit giving this project its place of importance. I hope that in the future it will be followed up on as it can bring about a constituency within higher education to be recond with. We should renew this initiative as it will build bridges across the State but will also do the same on our own campuses, linking us to the central mission.

A **sixth question to which we need to seek the answer: How do we relate to the research base of our colleges and universities?** How have we demonstrated to our college or university faculties and administrators our understanding and ability to conduct research on our programs and services? How have we demonstrated the connectedness of our programs and services to State and institutional initiatives? Research is a vital element of the higher education environment in which we work. As professionals in the higher education community we must link through research and case studies on our operations to the central focus of our colleges and universities. We are highly

visible in our teaching and public service roles but have fallen short in research which can document our contributions to the institution, community, State and Ohio's adult learners.

Research alone will not solve linkage problems and achieve instant credibility. By developing a research thrust through the Association by incorporating research/case study sessions in our conferences, summaries in **The Continuing Educator** and creating a juried research/case study award and prize within the Association we may be able to encourage this important linkage to the third role of our institutions - **research.** We need to take the initiative in this area and the Association can take the lead. The establishment of a Study and Research Center on Continuing Higher Education would go a long way to encourage this linkage.

A **seventh and final question whose resolution we do not enjoy relates to a marketing question: What differentiates us from other providers?** We need to identify those elements or factors which set us apart from other providers of continuing education. My reason for focusing on this question, which has been of recent days in **The Chronicle of Higher Education,** is not from the marketing positioning point of view but rather to focus on a question which has been raised in the Congress and in state legislatures. Yes, even in Ohio. It relates to tax on or the curtailment of business operations not directly connected to the mission of the institution and to questions raised by small business and entreprenuers as discussed in yesterday's session, A View from Columbus.

We need to concentrate on and accentuate those elements in continuing higher education's non-credit programs that differentiate us from vocational education, adult basic education, and private training consultants and firms in the for-profit setting. That differentiation not only focuses on the location but on resources connected to the State's higher education system. In credit course instruction our bases are in the academic departments, so too in non-credit education our bases need to be linked to the mission of the academic department and institution. In credit instruction often classes are taught by part-time faculty. However, the part-time faculty compliment the full-time faculty and academic mission of the department.

If we operate outside the academic department or college and school mission, then we are little different from the for-profit training firm. That creates a **new** problem given the microscope currently being used. The recent flurry of legislation to protect the private for-profit entrepreneur from higher education's encroachment into their sphere could rule out non-credit programs in the State's colleges and universities, public and private, because they are in direct competition with the firms to be protected by the proposed legislation. Look at the **July 1 Chronicle** and the language in Ohio's proposed legislation. The current focus is now on college or university operated travel services and stores offering clothing and records

to students. But, hotels, yes, even conference centers, are likely to fall under the microscope. Can non-credit courses, workshops, conferences and seminars be far behind?

An academically based non-credit program linked to mutually held goals - academic department and continuing education - would be positioned in a more defensible posture with regard to the legislation because of the connectedness rather than only being **located** on the campus.

We are among the entrepreneurs of higher education at the cutting edge of academic and consumer needs. These questions among others which may have come to your mind, as I set forth mine, require that we make a **renewed commitment** to the purpose of the Association by active participation in its governance and committees.

- We must have a sense of community responsibility for **our** State's professional continuing higher education association for it is ours. We created it.
- We must share in the setting of the direction and goals of the Association.
- We must together take on responsibility for its actions through its Committees and Constituencies.

During a trip to Columbus for an OCHEA Executive Board meeting in January while stopped at a traffic light I glanced down to the passenger seat to notice a lifeless pair of gloves. The chill of the 5:45 a.m. start caused me to put on the gloves which only a minute before were formless, lifeless leather. Once my hands were inserted, the gloves moved and took on shape. To a degree, the gloves and OCHEA are similar. Until **you and I inject ourselves into them, they are lifeless and possibly meaningless. By becoming involved in OCHEA through the committees, conferences and special activities we fill out the form and give life to an amorphus, unconsequential item.**

**When filled by our action the glove, and OCHEA, take on meaning and purpose, otherwise unseen and unknown.** Throughout the year I have asked for the membership to **make a difference in the Association by active involvement.**

Like this glove, no I don't mean to rival Michael Jackson, by inserting your ideas, hopes, plans and needs into the Association - OCHEA can take on shape and meaning for you.

An association like OCHEA requires individuals with leadership skills. Bennis and Naus in **Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge** identified four skills necessary to strengthen organization leadership:

- **creating focus and gaining attention through vision**
- **creating meaning through communication**
- **developing thrust through positioning and**
- **developing self through positive self regard.**

According to Bennis and Nanus, effective leaders move beyond the administrative aspects of their roles and become statespersons for the organizations they represent.

OCHEA needs you to work through the questions we have raised tonight so that they will not remain unanswered in a year or two.

Permit me to end on a personal note. With this meeting my three years on the Executive Board, with the last as President of the Association, comes to an end. I am grateful for the **trust and confidence** you have placed in me, for the **cooperation** you have given me and for the opportunity you have afforded me to be of **service and to learn.**

I have learned much in these three years. They have been challenging as well as I hope they have challenged some others. There have been some individuals with whom I have disagreed and they with me. That ability to disagree, discuss, debate and then come together for the common good is an important part of the Association we formed in April 1983. Whatever has been accomplished this year has built upon the foundation begun with Gary Wilson and carried on through Ferris Anthony and Sr. Donna Capuano and the members of the Association's Executive Boards, committees and constituencies.

I would be significantly remiss if I did not take a moment to thank the individuals on my staff at Youngstown State University who picked up on the loose ends at home while I was involved in OCHEA business. To **Barbara, Mary Edith, Teddi, Lee Ann, Scarlet, Dorothy and Jan who made my involvement possible, a sincere "Thank You".** Behind each male, so the story goes, is said to be a woman. In my case, the **special lady has been my secretary, Lori Graneto,** who typed all of those drafts and pages you thought would never end. **To her and her patience I, like Sr. Donna, tip my mortar board.**

**I encourage each of you to take stock, make a committment and decide to make a difference in OCHEA through active participation.** Thomas Carlyle once sagely observed, **"The end of man is an action and not a thought, though it were the noblest."** Noble thoughts must consistently lead to action, if the success of the Ohio Continuing Higher Education Association is to continue.

Your action determines where that extra impact is felt. Action is the key. You hold the key. You can help to unlock the promise of the future of OCHEA. I hope that you will join with me in saying,"**If it's going to be, it is up to me!" Take the time to make that special difference in OCHEA. You won't regret it! I haven't!**

**Thank you!**